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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A belting fabric ~~(100, 200)~~ comprising a plurality of adjacently disposed couplets ~~(110-119, 210-219)~~ of weft yarns ~~(105, 106, 206, 207)~~ forming an upper layer of weft yarns and a lower layer of weft yarns, a plurality of binder warp yarns ~~(120-122, 220-222)~~ each extending over at least one of the couplets of weft yarns in the upper layer and under at least two of said adjacently disposed couplets of weft yarns in the lower layer, and middle warp yarns ~~(107, 208)~~ between the upper layer and the lower layers, wherein the middle warp yarns are sufficiently straight and inelastic to bear loads under tension without twisting or stretching.

2. (Currently amended) The belting fabric in accordance with claim 1 wherein the middle warp yarns ~~(107, 208)~~ are formed of PET.

3. (Currently amended) The belting fabric in accordance with claims 1 or 2 wherein the middle warp yarns ~~(107, 208)~~ have a denier of at least 550.

4. (Currently amended) The belting fabric in accordance with claims 1-3 wherein the middle warp yarns ~~(107, 208)~~ are heat set under tension.

5. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of making a belting fabric, the method comprising the steps of claim 9 wherein:

arranging a plurality of couplets of weft yarns adjacent one another into an upper layer of weft yarns and a lower layer of weft yarns;

weaving a plurality of middle warp yarns between the upper and lower layers;

~~weaving~~ a first warp yarn is woven over a first of said couplets of weft yarns and under a second and a third of said couplets of weft yarns, disposed adjacent said first of said couplets;

~~weaving~~ a second warp yarn is woven over a second of said couplets of weft yarns and under a third and fourth of said couplets of weft yarns, disposed adjacent said second of said couplets; and

~~weaving~~ a third warp yarn is woven over a third of said couplets of weft yarns and under fourth and fifth of said couplets of weft yarns, disposed adjacent said third of said couplets; ~~and~~.

~~heat setting the middle warp yarns.~~

6. (New) The belting fabric in accordance with claim 2 wherein the middle warp yarns have a denier of at least 550.

7. (New) The belting fabric in accordance with claim 2 wherein the middle warp yarns are heat set under tension.

8. (New) The belting fabric in accordance with claim 3 wherein the middle warp yarns are heat set under tension.

9. (New) A method of making a belting fabric, the method comprising the steps of:

arranging a plurality of couplets of weft yarns adjacent one another into an upper layer of weft yarns and a lower layer of weft yarns;

weaving a plurality of middle warp yarns between the upper and lower layers;

weaving a plurality of warp yarns over a first of said couplets of weft yarns and under a plurality of adjacent couplets of weft yarns; and

heat setting the middle warp yarns.

10. (New) The method of claim 9 wherein the plurality of warp yarns is woven under two adjacent couplets of weft yarns.

11. (New) The method of claim 9 wherein the plurality of warp yarns is woven under three adjacent couplets of weft yarns.

12. (New) A conveyor belt comprising:
a belting fabric having a plurality of adjacently disposed couplets of weft yarns forming an upper layer of weft yarns and a lower layer of weft yarns, a plurality of binder warp yarns each extending over at least one of the couplets of weft yarns in the upper layer and under at least two of said adjacently disposed couplets of weft yarns in the lower layer, and middle warp yarns between the upper layer and the lower layers, wherein the middle warp yarns are sufficiently straight and inelastic to bear loads under tension without twisting or stretching; and
a cover layer.

13. (New) The conveyor belt of claim 12 wherein the cover layer is formed of a material selected from rubber, plasticized polyvinyl, or PVC.

14. (New) The conveyor belt of claim 12 wherein the middle warp yarns are formed of PET.

15. (New) The conveyor belt of claim 14 wherein the middle warp yarns have a denier of at least 550.

16. (New) The conveyor belt of claim 15 wherein the middle warp yarns are heat set under tension.

17. (New) The conveyor belt of claim 12 wherein the middle warp yarns have a denier of at least 550.

18. (New) The conveyor belt of claim 17 wherein the middle warp yarns are heat set under tension.

19. (New) The conveyor belt of claim 12 wherein the middle warp yarns are heat set under tension.

20. (New) The conveyor belt of claim 19 wherein the middle warp yarns are formed of PET.